



**Representative  
Velma Veloria**

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Trade and Economic  
Development (Chair)  
Capital Budget  
Criminal Justice and Corrections

**Task Force:**

HDC Task Force on Economic  
Competitiveness  
International Caucus

**Toll Free Legislative Hotline:**

1-800-562-6000

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## **State Representative Velma Veloria**

### **11th Legislative District**

## **2004 Legislative Report and Survey**

*Dear neighbor,*

*The year got off to a rocky start with the snow storm we had the first week of January. I hope you and your family made it through safely and kept warm.*

*By the time you receive this report we will have already started our 2004 Legislative Session. There are many significant issues to bring to the floor and, as always, my interest is in addressing those that hold the most importance to you.*

*My work will reflect our district's community concerns, especially those related to improving our economy, making intelligent investments in education, and assuring quality health care for our families.*

*Thank you for reviewing my newsletter today. Inside you'll find a short survey; please take a moment to answer it. I highly value your input. Your involvement in the government process is crucial and it helps me carry out my job, which is to serve you.*

*I want to take this opportunity to wish you the very best this New Year and let you know how much I truly appreciate your letters, e-mails and telephone communication. Please continue to stay in touch with your comments and questions.*

*Sincerely,*

*Velma Veloria*

Rep. Velma Veloria

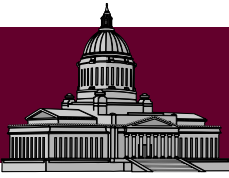


## **Wiping out the primary saved us big bucks**

As you know, in a special Legislative Session early last month we agreed to cancel our state's 2004 presidential primary. The reasons were obvious: it would have been an irrelevant election and neither major party would have paid much attention to the results. By canceling it, we managed to save almost \$7 million.



In this election year, Democrats are using caucus meetings to select our presidential candidate, and Republicans already have their nominee. It doesn't make sense for Washington taxpayers to pay \$7 million to stage a fruitless presidential primary. I want to make sure you know that calling off the 2004 primary is a one-time deal — Washington state's presidential primary can certainly resume for the 2008 election.



# State Representative Velma Veloria

## There's no business like small business

I was reading an article in the paper the other day in which they said Washington state ranks high in the business climate scale. It's true; after all we have quite a few worldwide known corporations that call Washington home.



But I'm concerned about the other players

in this business field: the ones that are family-owned and operated; the ones that don't have gazillion dollars to get started and are forced to move out. It's clear we need to focus more on business retention if we want our economy to continue developing.

To accomplish precisely that, this session I will keep on pushing to make it easier for community businesses to access government resources and capital. Our workers deserve dependable family-wage jobs with benefits. That's why it's necessary to:

- carry out targeted research funding for local business clusters
- invest in human capital and infrastructure, and
- make intelligent investments in education.

Not everybody can attend a four year college, there are many people out there making a decent living after completing apprenticeship programs. For instance the Duwamish Training Center, a branch of South Seattle Community College, provides training and instruction for more than 6,000 students each year. That's one out of three apprentices in the state. Workers who complete the programs earn an average of \$50,599 per year. I'm working to help the Center get some much needed land for its expansion. This is one way to insure economic growth in our state.

## The Budget

Last year we had to adopt a budget that nobody was happy with. This session we'll write a much smaller, supplemental budget to reflect changes in the economy since last spring. I'll focus on making it as fair a budget as possible.

With more young people attending our schools and larger social-service caseloads, we'll consider recommendations from the second round of work done by the Washington Competitiveness Council — a group of labor, education, business, and civic leaders who have been researching ways to kick-start our economy.



The governor released his new budget proposal a few weeks ago. Following several of the Competitiveness Council recommendations, his plan moves our state — at least in some cases — down the correct path. It's a good starting point for budget negotiations between the House and the Senate.

The bottom line is that our policies should build jobs that we can count on to be there tomorrow. To achieve such an objective, we need budget provisions and state policies that provide:

- Additional college-enrollment in nursing and computer science — two of the fields where we're most in need of more high-trained people.
- Greater support for colleges and industries that rely on research-and-development work to outrace competitors in other states and nations.
- Better funding for worker-training and retraining programs.
- More use of apprentices in public-works projects.
- Stronger help for schools where students are at-risk of falling behind.

## Health care for all, not just a few

Last year one of our greatest accomplishments was passing the prescription-drug legislation and it is now time to review its implementation.



That's a start, but we've got plenty of work still ahead. We have to address a two-front crisis in liability insurance: the lack of sufficient medical-malpractice coverage — and when coverage is available, the huge price tag for it. The medical-malpractice issue and patient safety — will be high on everyone's agenda for the 2004 session.

We're exploring options, but I believe an insurance company should justify rate hikes for doctors — just as the telephone company must justify rate hikes for telephone-users.

Where availability is a problem (for some long-term-care providers, for instance), we're looking at the establishment of a joint-underwriting association in which the state insures providers that cannot find liability insurance.

We're also considering a patient-compensation fund, which would cover claims above the minimum level of coverage purchased by health-care providers. And we're reviewing ways to make the insurance industry more accountable for its rate-setting decisions.

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**Rep. Velma Veloria**  
**P.O. Box 40600**  
**Olympia, WA 98504-0600**

# Survey – what do YOU think?

Please fill out the following survey, cut along the dotted line, affix a stamp, and mail back to me

**Education**

Do you have children or grandchildren in our public schools?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

Do you think our public schools receive enough state funding?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

Do you believe a good education is the surest route to a good job?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

Do you worry about your child or grandchild getting into college, or having enough money to pay for tuition?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

**Health Care**

Do you think it is better to help our seniors and disabled citizens remain in their own homes as long as they can, rather than moving them to nursing homes?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

If Washington State can use federal funds, should we decrease insurance premiums for the children of our lower-income working families?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

Do you believe that the health of children affects their ability to achieve in school?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

**Good jobs**

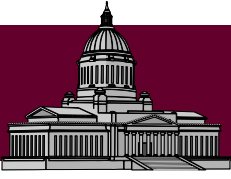
Do you think the Legislature was right to do all it could in order to convince Boeing to build its new jet in Washington State?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

Do you think offering tax incentives is a good way to help businesses succeed?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

If so, would you still feel that way if it meant less funding for schools and health care?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No

Do you think we should increase our workforce training programs to make sure our employees have skills that match the needs of our employers?  
\_\_\_Yes  
\_\_\_No





# *State Representative* **Velma Veloria**

Comments:

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**2004 Legislative Report and Survey**

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